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Farini, Federico (2008) Citizenship as practice: critical evaluation of educational communication as means of young migrants' social participation. *Socialno Delo / Social Work*, 47 (3-6) . pp. 133-144. ISSN 0352-7956 [Article]

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# **Citizenship as practice: critical evaluation of educational communication as means of young migrants' social participation**

## **1. Introduction to the research**

With this paper we propose the results of an analysis of three projects addressed to promote social integration of Children of International Migrants (CIM). These projects took place in the Province of Modena (Region Emilia-Romagna) in 2004-2006. A methodological premise of our research was that an ethnographical analysis of interactions by which the projects became concrete could impart the ability to recognise social structures and cultural forms of social interventions. Following this premise we focused our attention to the communication processes that involved social workers and CIM during the interventions, to analyse the influence of social structures of communication and cultural forms on the social interventions. All of the interactions we analysed, according to their features, were educational. What are the features of educational interactions? What we mean for “educational”? In which way educational communication influences the outcomes of social interventions? Is education the best medium to support social integration of CIM? To answer to these questions, we have to start from a theoretical definition of education.

Traditionally, commonly endorsed and commonly observed norms and values are considered a prerequisite for an integrated society (Heyting *et al.* 2002). In Parson's view normative orientations materialise as social roles and role expectancies, therefore contribution of schooling and education to the integration of society consists in the furthering and strengthening of consensus on these basic values (Parson 1951).

Niklas Luhmann's sociology offers an alternative theoretical framework; Luhmann stresses that the fundamental function of education is not to impart knowledge, to discipline, to transmit social values and norms, but to minimise the improbability of social communication. Education imparts to pupils the ability to participate to social communication, that is to say to behave in a (largely) predictable way in social contexts. If one had to take into consideration the empirical multi-facets of other human beings, communication would be impossible. Because it is possible to simplify the complexity of psychic variability, speaking with one as a teacher, another as a pupil, and a third as a beloved, communication is possible (Luhmann 1984). “Teacher”, “pupil”, “beloved”, and many others in modern society, are social roles. We define social roles as “human beings made communicative through socialisation”.

In complex societies socialisation has to be a systematised process, necessary to reproduce social knowledge and capabilities acquired in long sequences of coordinated individual steps. We define this systemized process as “education”. The difference between education and non-systemised

socialization is that educational communication is always intentional, attributable to intentions, programmed on the basis of scientific premises (pedagogy).

Education is a communication process organised in a systematic way by educational organisations. Among educational organisation we have *specialised offices* that program the educational standards following pedagogical premises. Offices observe limits and weakness of educational programs and reform them, again following pedagogical premises that are continuously changing. Another kind of educational organisations is *schools*, where educational communication materialises as relations between social roles. Schools are educational organisation that have both an administrative and a pedagogical management. Pedagogical management is composed by educators that control the movement of pupils in a hierarchy of “educational steps”, each of them representing a standardised level of cognitive performances, defined by educational programs.

The concept of “*grammar of education*” (Tyack & Cuban 2000) describes the relations between social roles in educational organisations. These relations are asymmetric, because educators instructs pupils but pupils do not instruct the educator. Grammar of education is based on expectancies attached to social roles; these expectancies enable modes of support and co-operation, excluding others, enhance particular types of experiences, at the expense of others.

Grammar of education involves the evaluation of pupils’ performances, with respect to standardised expectancies. Education has generalised expectancies about cognitive development of pupils: age is connected to a specific cognitive status.

Grammar of education is also necessary to evaluate if pupils satisfy educational expectancies, by mean of specialised interaction systems (examinations) and the observation of their everyday participation to educational interactions. The redundancy of evaluations creates expectancies about the “quality” of each pupil. In this sense educational communication transforms equality into inequality.

Education builds hierarchies among pupils on the basis of the adherence of their cognitive performances to standardised expectancies. It follows that the marginalisation of pupils who do not satisfy standardised cognitive performances is possible. (Luhmann 1990; Baraldi & Iervese 2004; Iervese 2006). These effects of education are described as “secondary socialisation”, where “secondary” refers to the unpredictable and often unseen consequences of education as an intentional form of socialisation.

Since the early years of this decade, surveys by educational offices in Emilia-Romagna and Province of Modena have been showing that secondary effects of education have negative impact on the educational careers of Children of International Migrants (CIM). Firstly, a research report by Province of Modena showed in 2003 that CIM who entered the Italian education system in the high schools from 1993 to 2001 experienced serious difficulties in accomplished high schools curricula.

Recently a report by Regione Emilia Romagna (2007) shows that CIM represent about 11% of high-school students the Province of Modena, with peaks of 18% in southern area. Another report

by Province of Modena in the same year shows that the percentage of CIM who enter High Schools is the same as the percentage of Italians coevals (about 75%), but the rate of failure in the educational career among CIM (45%) is about two times higher than the one among Italians (25%). CIM show difficulties in reaching standardised performances requested by host educational system, in most cases because of inadequate linguistic competencies, more rarely because of their provenance from educational systems with different curricula.

The origins of asymmetries in the educational careers between CIM and Italians appear to be also social, according to the results of a research financed by Province of Modena (Iervese & Farini 2006). This research highlights that standardised cognitive expectations of education are systematically selected by host students to determine the value of strangers fellows not just as students but also as persons. The research shows *a model of CIM marginalisation process* in the host educational system. CIM who are not able to perform adequately are categorised as incompetent on the basis of cognitive expectancies that don't recognise cultural variability. This categorisation allows the construction of generalised expectancies of inadequacy ascribed to the condition of CIM. Prejudicial marginalisation of CIM is justified with reference to cultural characteristics.

In the terms of *integrated conflict management theory* (Fisher *et al.* 1991) while the *interests* of host students regards the construction of a personal identity (*I am a competent participant to educative communication so I am a competent social actor*) their *positions* are ethnocentric and exploit group-based differences (*I am competent, because I am different from Them that are not competent, as their failures demonstrate*).

Researches focused on the relations among pairs in mono-cultural classroom (Baraldi *et al.* 2001; Baraldi 2003a; Baraldi, 2005) show that the ability to satisfy standardised cognitive expectation of education is used as a reference to determine the value pupils not only as social roles but also as persons. Following the *identity-based conflicts theory* (Smyth, 2004) these researches describe the way in which social identities in the classrooms are generated. This process consists of two components:

- 1) a demand for conformity to standardised, cultural blind, cognitive and normative expectations of education system;
- 2) marginalisation practices involving pupils who are not able to satisfy those expectations. Marginalisation practices are communication processes that combine the construction of a group identity inclusive of the ones that satisfy the expectation of the system (the competent “Us”) with the categorization in a shapeless group of non-competent “Them” of the ones that are not able to satisfy education's expectancies.

The similarities between the model of *CIM marginalisation in multicultural classrooms* and the

model of *social identity creation in monocultural classrooms* suggest that processes of social exclusion are connected with educational communication.

Since 2003 the high rate of educational failures among CIM has been recognised as a relevant social problem by Province of Modena Education Office. According to Emilia-Romagna Region educational guidelines social integration of CIM is connected to educational integration. Education should give to CIM cognitive competencies required for the participation to the most relevant social processes. School is also observed as an alternative socialisation context to ethnic groups. Emilia-Romagna educational guidelines consider the absence of relations outside the “ethnic group” as an obstacle for the involvement of CIM in the most relevant social processes in the host society. “Intensity” and “relevance” of non-ethnic relations (i.e. their importance for the access to basic resources, both material and symbolic) are used as indicators of the adaptation degree to host society. With “adaptation”, following Kim (2001), it is meant the acquisition of ability to participate to the most relevant host social processes, from that the access to basic resources (e.g. work, social services) depends, not the adequacy to a host culture, recognised to be qualitatively superior. Adaptation depends from participation to host social processes, through which communicative competence increase. The development of communicative competence creates the conditions for the improvement of social ease.

The Education Office and the Social Policies and Integration Office at the City Council of Modena designed three projects addressed to sustain social participation of CIM (Children of International Migrants) empowering their active citizenship, for the years 2004/2005 and 2005/2006. These projects were:

- 1) INTENDIAMOCI 1 (I1), that took place during fall 2004;
- 2) INTENDIAMOCI 2 (I2), that took place during spring 2005;
- 3) COMICS (Children Of Migrants Inclusion Creative Systems), that took place from November 2005 to May 2006.

I1 and I2 were financed by the City Council of Modena and the Province of Modena; COMICS was co-financed by European Commission (DG Justice, Freedom and Security), in the framework of INTI Call For Projects 2004.

We describe the main guidelines of these interventions we will analyse at the level of communication processes by which they took empirically form.

I1 and I2 consisted in an intervention in multicultural classrooms by a professional photographer and an intercultural mediator. The photographer took pictures of the pupils, both Italians and CIM, then asking to pupils to do it by themselves. The point was to make pupils test that everyone has his own perspective to look from at the others. The intercultural mediator, then promoted a discussion about the meaning of this experience, with particular regard to the process of creation of differences and identities.

COMICS project involved exclusively CIM. It consisted in the creation of a comic book by CIM, by which they narrate their own history of integration in the host society. COMICS was a European project that involved five cities (Modena, Roubaix, Thessaloniki, Rotterdam and Essen). Five comics were created, so CIM had the opportunity to compare, in a direct and accessible way, their histories through Europe.

The premise of these three interventions was that social integration depends on social participation. Social participation describes social actions that are both autonomous and visible in society. Visibility of a social action describes its relevance beyond local social systems, for instance the group of coevals. Autonomy of a social action means that this social action is not ascribable to the fulfillment of generalized expectancies referred to standardized social roles.

The approach to the promotion of social integration of CIM shared by I1, I2 and COMICS is different from the more traditional approach that observes citizenship as an achievement that individuals achieve through their participation to education (Lavy & Biesta 2006). It means that young people are not considered citizens until they have completed a basic educational curriculum. I1, I2 and COMICS shared the concept of “Citizenship As Practice” (CAP). Citizenship is not as a sort of cognitive status to be reached but the outcomes of the experience of everyday participation to social processes. CAP is an inclusive way to look to young people as citizens; instead of seeing citizenship as the outcome of learning trajectories, CAP suggests that young people learn to be citizens as a consequence of their participation in the actual practices that make up their lives. CAP means working “with”, rather than “on”, young people.

I1, I2 and COMICS looked at the promotion of social integration of CIM as an outcome of a reflection about everyday experience of participation to host social processes. The activities proposed to CIM (and Italians in the case of I1 and I2) wanted to stimulate this reflection, with the help of adult social operators. With “social operators” we mean social workers with academic pedagogical curricula, who participate to a training course in intercultural communication. All of the operators knew the theoretical premises of interventions.

With this paper we propose the results of an analysis of the educational interactions by which these projects took empirically form. We observe interactions as episodes of broader communication processes, the interventions: a methodological premise of our analysis is that interactions always show the structural components of communication processes they are part of. We have analysed if grammar of education, generalised cultural-blind expectancies of educational communication and the categorisation of CIM as problematic pupils played a role making social participation of CIM improbable even in the contexts of projects addressed to sustain it.

A carefully ethnographical analysis of interactions shows that grammar of education and generalised cultural-blind expectancies of education and the categorisation of CIM as problematic

pupils do play a role, firstly shaping practices by operators that involved at the same time social control and denial of personal autonomy.

On the basis of the results of our analysis we will offer some guide-lines we think could be useful for professionals engaged in the promotion of migrant's social participation, even outside the Italian scenario.

## **2. Methodology of the research**

We analysed education interactions by which I1, I2 and COMICS took form. We focused our attention to:

1. the cultural forms of education, expectancies and rhetoric of educational communication;
2. the social structures of communication.

We gathered data through real-time recording, thought to be indispensable for understanding interactions. We also think that, since the publication of Charles Goodwin's now classic work on the interactive coordination of gaze, posture, and sentence construction (Goodwin 1981), serious work at the intersection of language and interaction needs videotape technology. It is true that camera's "eye" suffers from unidirectionality and must be positioned with the needs of analysis in mind. In addition, the number of technological considerations rises dramatically with video. Another obvious concern is what effect being videotaped will have on the behavior of the participants to communication processes. But while we are sure that we are having some effect on our subjects, it also seems clear that they habituate themselves to our presence and we become less influential over time. Moreover, our focus is on the detailed conversational practices within the classroom, a large part of which we assume is behavior that is beyond the ability of most people to alter significantly for extended periods of time.

On the other hand, advantages of video recording are compelling. Identifying speakers is made much easier by watching, not just the movement of lips, but the motion, gaze, and posture of participants. Much of the taken-for-granted fabric of our social existence can be exposed under repeated viewings of well-recorded material that render it in sufficient detail that an analyst can move closer to an account of what is actually happening, as opposed to what he or she assumes is happening (Zuengler & Fassnacht 1998).

We analysed data gathered through video-recording using Conversation Analysis (CA). During its 40-years history, CA produced many rigorous concept that describes structural features of organisation of human interactions (Heritage 1995). We observed the effects of some of these structures on the level of active participation of CIM to activities in the framework of social interventions addressed to sustain CIM participation to host society. We think that if a social

intervention cannot create the conditions of social participation of their addressee to the communication processes by which it takes form, it cannot produce those conditions for their social participation in their everyday life.

Among the works in the field of CA Heritage's researches (2002) on the functions of negative-interrogative questions in conversation inspired us in recognising them a powerful rhetorical devices in educational communication. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson works on turn taking systems (Sacks *et al.* 1974) suggested us to analyse the way in which turn taking rules can be used to pursue educational goals.

### **3. The rhetorical exploitation of turn taking system. The claim for intersubjectivity to reallocate social participation**

We analysed the effects of educational communication with regard to their consistency with the goal of I1, I2 and COMICS, that is to say the sustaining of social integration of CIM. To mark the intonation of the interactions we use the Jeffersonian transcription system (Jefferson 2004, see table 1 at the end of the paper).

Interactions between educators and pupils in the classrooms, are usually organised as speech-exchange systems (Sacks *et al.* 1974). It means that in educational interactions turns can be pre-allocated by the action of a social role, the educator, who organises the participation of pupils, for instance selecting the next speaker through the addressing of questions. In the interventions we analysed the relationships between social operators and CIM were always coherent with the generalised form of educational communication in the classrooms. We observed that the management of turn taking had a deep impact on the participation of CIM.

Turn taking rules that allocate the opportunity to talk among participants, are a pre-requisite for the development of any communication process; without an organised turn-taking system communication would soon fall into chaos.

In some circumstances turn taking rules in action can be broken: researches in the field of CA (Schegloff 1991) show that problems of understanding of prior utterance allow to get the turn, even if another is talking. Problems in understanding allow to suspend, not definitively but “step by step”, the efficacy of turn taking rules: we observed that social operators systematically exploited this opportunity to interfere with communication in the case communication seems to bring about meanings inconsistent with objectives on the interventions.

Social operators got the turn of talk out of a transition-relevant place, that is to say before another speaker completed his/her turn, to interrupt utterance of meanings they didn't like, exploiting the possibility to do so in case of problems in understanding.

In the following sequence (sequence 1) the social operator pretended to equivocate the meaning of



pronoun “us” (“noi” in italian) uttered by a boy, as it would involve him too; in this way he/she could break turn taking rule in action, getting the turn before the interlocutor completed his turn. This violation of turn taking rule, apparently connected to problems in understanding, gave the opportunity to educator to reiterate his/her disagreement with the behaviour of interlocutors. Educator’s behaviour is strategically addressed to sustain a specific value: that no one can unilaterally impose anything. This value is considered to be a basic one for a successful social integration. The problem is that this value is proposed through the violation of the communication space of a participant. This educational strategy limits social participation of CIM, so it appears to be inconsistent with the goals of the interventions.

### Sequence 1, COMICS project

1 Ahmed: Nicu was about to leave the team, yeah? (0.7) he didn't  
2 want to do anything for the team! [He wa:nts]  
3 Op: [excuse me] this issue  
4 does interest me but: I don't catch the problem,  
5 Ahmed: he has to fill with colors, but=  
6 Op: =who said that he has to do this?  
7 Lisa: us, last time in the team meeting, we [sai-]  
8 Op: [us?] excuse me, I  
9 don't understand, I also said he has to fill? I do not  
10 remember  
11 Ahmed: no, we, the team decided  
12 Op: you the team but Nicu, you decided something he had to  
13 do, [but]  
14 Lisa: [ok] ok he can do any[thing]  
15 Op: [it's] it's: what you did (.)  
16 impose your decision, Ahmed?  
17 ((silence))  
18 Op: you see that issue?  
19 ((silence))  
20 Op: you will, keep going on with your work

## 6. The rhetorical exploitation of turn taking system. The switch of speaker selection rules to sustain educational communication.

With a “current speaker selects next” rule in action the party so selected has the right, and is obliged, to take next turn to speak. We observed that social operators exploited this rule to avoid that educational communication stopped. When lengthy gaps followed the completion of their turn, operators systematically utter a question selecting a next speaker, who couldn’t avoid to speak, without questioning the legitimacy of operator's action.

In the following sequence, after a long pause the operator opened a meta-communication dimension with rhetorical goals, to highlight he/she’s was just seeking information, not asking for an account of deviant behaviour CIM were accused of.

### Sequence 2, COMICS project

1 Op: so, you all agree (.)He has to dra:w? I see you are  
2 forcing someone to do something (.) hh find an agreement  
3 (.) is it its meaning? Agreement is to overcome the  
4 others?  
5 (5)  
6 Op: I’m just asking, eh? You see it in your everydaylife?  
7 Does it happen with your friends?  
8 (7)  
9 Op: you answer now, Michail  
10 Michail: I:  
11 (5)  
12 Op: is it awful? >another solution isn’t possible?< (0.5)  
13 another solutio:n? different from what you see everyday?  
14 (5)  
15 Op: You: what you have to say?  
16 (5)  
17 Mahmud: I: I don’t see things like this at [home]  
18 Op: Feel free to talk about  
19 Mahmud: about nothing!  
20 Op: another solution: (.) again -  
21 ((silence))

Participants understood that social operator's question (lines 1-4) was addressed to force them to acknowledge their accountability for the marginalisation of their team-mate (he was forced to draw while he wanted to contribute to write the plot of the team's story). Social operator's question was addressed to produce the condition for the expression of a value, the refusal of exclusion, considered as relevant for the social integration of CIM.

In sequence 2, educational strategy had unpredictable outcomes: its addressees chose silence to avoid the involvement in educational communication. Social operator, to avoid that educational communication stopped, switched the rule of turn taking to "current speaker selects next", addressing a question to a specific interlocutor.

After the selected speaker, Michail, fails in offering an account of his behaviour, and after a third long pause, the operator started a brainstorming session that suddenly failed, because his/her interlocutors again chose silence, again refused to admit they needed to be educated. For the second time the operator switched turn-taking rule to current speaker selects next (line 15) but, again, the rhetorical device was ineffective. The awareness of the educational relationship between them and the operator imparted to CIM the ability to recognise the educational valence of utterances: consequently they were able to neutralise it, by the means their role in the relationship allowed them to use, that is to say silence.

## **7. The rhetoric use of negative-interrogative questions to promote second order observation in pupils' communication systems**

In the case of deviant behaviour, in conflict with expectancies of the educational system, deviancy provokes no doubt about the actual validity of the criterion, therefore deviance is understood as an ascribable action, stimulating the assumption that something is wrong with its performer (Schneider 2000). Following Luhmann and Schorr (1999) we can say that education, because of its apparatus of standardised expectancies attached to social roles, tends to low levels of reflexivity.

The asymmetries among social roles are social structures that allow an educator to take his/her expectancies as a valid criterion for judging the behaviour of pupils (in this case, allow an operator to take his/her expectancies as a valid criterion for judging the behaviour of CIM).

We observed that interrogative-negatives questions were often designed to favour a response from their addressees that contrasts with their earlier statements or actions, forcing them to acknowledge that there was something wrong in their behaviour (Heritage 2002). We have observed that operators made use of interrogative-negative question to force CIM to acknowledge some problematic aspects of their behaviour. This acknowledgement should be the first step of a reflection focused on alternative behaviour, more coherent with the goal of social integration.

CIM usually understood the rhetorical valence of interrogative-negatives questions and their hostile

contents, and refused to align with operators' strategic questions; CIM refused the role of people in need of education.

In most cases operators surrogated the reflection that interrogative-negatives question weren't able to sustain accounting CIM for lack of competence in relationships' management, with a harsh negative evaluation of their behaviour. By doing so operators gave themselves the opportunity to impose their expectancies, but it didn't come priceless. The expression of an evaluation of CIM behaviour activated the asymmetries between social roles of education. These asymmetries are inconsistent with the goal of the interventions, to sustain social integration of CIM starting from their active and autonomous participation to the interventions.

Moreover, the expression of negative evaluations by operators activated ethnocentric reactions among its addressee, with the connection of the educational asymmetry educator-pupils to the ethnical differences among operators and CIM.

### Sequenza 3, Intendiamoci 2 project

1 Op(Photograp.):excuse me but: (.) to avoid misunderstanding (0.7)  
2 the decision that Josh would collaborate with both  
3 team has been taken last time we meet, ain't that?  
4 Peaches(G1): but we:  
5 Op(Photograp.):no: if you had to tal:k (0.3) it was this morning;  
6 hh did you listen to yourselves taking the decision?  
7 Miriam(G1): °no, it is tha:t°  
8 Op(Photograp.): this is your problem hh, don't you  
9 think?  
10 Josh: yes, >but then we said [also-]<  
11 Op(Photograp.): [I'm not] interested in it,  
12 it is your problem, that is taking away 10 minutes  
13 (.) in a quarter of hour we weren't able to find a  
14 solution to a proble:m that seems to me very easy  
15 Nicu: the problem is that they don't respect the rules  
16 Op(Photograp.):don't raise your voice it could offend someone  
17 here, it is important to stay calm when talking with  
18 others  
19 Nicu: You raise your voice!  
20 Peaches: just like always; Italians can do everything, is not  
21 a matter we seem to be not able to understand what



interventions, an active and autonomous social participation.

Social operators interfered with CIM autonomous participation to interactions as soon as it brought about meanings inconsistent with the ideological and theoretical premises of the interventions. These interferences empirically materialised as overlapping and interruptions in conversation. Even though these events of communication have to be understood as operators' efforts to create the condition for the transmission values, norms and knowledge thought to be necessary to CIM social integration, they brought CIM to mistrust their opportunity of an autonomous social participation.

Interrogative-negative questions, strategic misunderstanding of contributes, the switch of turn taking rules share something: they rely on grammar of education. They presuppose that social operators control the trajectories of interactions, exploiting role asymmetries.

We observed that social operators didn't experience difficulties in doing it, but this didn't come priceless; it cost the failure of promotional goals that is to say the failure of the social intervention. As soon as their addressee understood the educational intentions of social operators they tried to escape from communication and if they were forced to do participate to educational interaction, they limited their social participation to the lowest levels.

We think that the problem is that educational communication is not an efficient medium for the promotion of social participation. But the educational one is not the only communication form available. In the last fifteen years relevant studies in the field of intercultural education have defined the characteristics of a communication form that promise to be much more effective than education in sustaining social integration of young migrants by mean of the promotion of their autonomous participation. This communication form is called "dialogue"; features of dialogue could be summarised as follows (Gergen *et al.* 2001; Gudykunst 1994; Isajiw 2000; Littlejohn 2004; Pearce & Pearce, 2003): 1) distribution of active participation in interaction; 2) addressing of participants' interests and/or needs (empathy); 3) expression and display of personal attitudes and stories; 4) checking participants' perceptions; 5) active listening; 6) appreciation of actions and experience; 7) interactive feedback on the participants' actions; 8) avoidance of intimidating assertions.

If social integration of CIM has to be reached by mean of their everyday experience of autonomous participation to host social processes, a social intervention aiming to offer to CIM a first experience of social participation needs a communication form specialised in promoting self-expression of communicators, a communication form that creates mutual trust, that is able explore common ground and continuity of views between interlocutors.

We think that the experience of mutual trust in intercultural communication is a fundamental step to social integration in host society. In the theoretical framework of CAP trust created by a dialogical communication form is a form of "practiced citizenship".

We analysed in 2006 an experimentation of application of dialogue, in the context of a project addressed to the promotion of non-violent conflict management that took place in primary schools

in Region Emilia-Romagna in 2005 and 2006. This project was monitored step by step in its development by a research team of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Iervese 2006).

The research showed that the application of dialogue was effective in promoting non-violent forms of conflict management in the classrooms. Although this project involved children (age 10 to 12) rather than adolescents and young adults, we can say that their results are very promising.

Dialogue requires educators/social operators to:

- 1) respect the turn of talk of their interlocutors, to show their unconditioned appreciation for their self-expression. It means to avoid overlapping and turn taking outside transition relevance points;
- 2) make use of rhetorical tools to promote the socialisation of reflection about everyday experience through self-narration. An effective tools seem to be the use of *continuers* (Fairley 2000), that is to say little tokens used to sustain the current speaker in his/her talking;
- 3) avoid the use of rhetorical tools that rely on grammar of education, because grammar of education brings about social asymmetries and disincentives the autonomous participation of pupils/young people. The activation of dialogue to create mutual trust between educators/social operators and the addressee of the interventions cannot take the paradoxical form of strategic action that, if understood in its hidden function, motivate mistrusts and disincentive participation to communication.

The limits of educational communication we observed analysing I1, I2 and COMICS and the success of dialogue suggest that for social workers that operates among adolescents and young adults, dialogue is an opportunity to experiment, to make their work more effective and the projects in which they are involved more efficient.

Table 1:

### The transcription system

Used to mark the intonation of the analysed interactions

[ ]

Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of overlap as in the example below.

↑

Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech.

text

indicates emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis

°text°

‘degree’ signs enclose hearably quieter speech.

(0.4)

Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 4 tenths of a second). If they are not part of a particular speaker’s talk they should be on a new line. If in doubt use a new line.

(.)

A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.

((comment))

Additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. about features of context or delivery.

Te:xt

Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation.

h

Aspiration (out-breaths); proportionally as for colons.

.h

Inspiration (in-breaths); proportionally as for colons.



tex-

hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound.

>he said<

‘greater than’ and ‘lesser than’ signs enclose speeded-up talk.

text= =text

‘Equals’ signs mark the immediate ‘latching’ of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval

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